Please add the following claims:

--45. A composition for treating pain in an animal for a sustained period of time, which comprises:

a polymer matrix containing sodium hyaluronate and a nonionic polymer, said polymer matrix being suspended in a liquid medium;

a therapeutically effective amount of a drug for treating pain dispersed within said polymer matrix;

wherein the molar ratio of the sodium hyaluronate to the nonionic polymer is 1:0.5 to 4, said sodium hyaluronate being present in amounts of about 2.0% to about 3.5% by weight of said composition; and

wherein said composition is ~~capable of being~~ topically applied to said animal to treat pain.--

--46. The composition of claim 45, wherein the drug for treating pain is selected from the group consisting of anesthetics, analgesics, nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDS), steroids, hormones, antibiotics, metal salts, minerals and combinations thereof.--

--47. The composition of claim 46, wherein said anesthetic is selected from the group consisting of benzocaine, tetracaine,

mepivacaine, prilocaine, etidocaine, bupivacaine, lidocaine and combinations thereof.

--48. The composition of claim 46, wherein said analgesic is selected from the group consisting of acetaminophen, ibuprofen, fluriprofen, ketoprofen, voltaren, phenacetin, salicylamide and combinations thereof.--

--49. The composition of claim 46, wherein said non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID) is selected from the group consisting of diclofenac, naproxen, acetaminophen, ibuprofen, flurbiprofen, ketoprofen, phenacetin, salicylamide, indomethacin and combinations thereof.--

--50. The composition of claim 46, wherein said steroid is selected from the group consisting of anabolics, corticoids, glucocorticoids and combinations thereof.--

--51. The composition of claim 46, wherein said hormone is selected from the group consisting of ACTH, androgens, estrogens, gonadotropin, human growth hormone, hypocalcemic, menotropins, progesterone, progestogen, urofollitropin, vasopressin and combinations thereof.--

--52. The composition of claim 46, wherein the antibiotic is selected from the group consisting of erythromycin, penicillin, cephalosporins, derivatives thereof and combinations thereof.--

--53. The composition of claim 46, wherein the metal salt is selected from the group consisting of potassium chloride, lithium carbonate and combinations thereof.--

--54. The composition of claim 46, wherein the mineral is selected from the group consisting of iron, chromium, molybdenum, potassium and combinations thereof.--

--55. The composition of claim 45, wherein the drug for treating pain is diclofenac ~~or a derivative thereof~~.--

--56. The composition of claim 55, wherein said derivative is selected from the group consisting of diclofenac sodium, diclofenac potassium and combinations thereof.--

--57. The composition of claim 45, wherein the molar ratio of the sodium hyaluronate to the nonionic polymer is 1:0.5 to 2.--

--58. The composition of claim 45, wherein said sodium hyaluronate has a sulphated ash content below about 15%, a protein content below about 5% and purity of at least 98%.--

--59. The composition of claim 45, wherein the pain is located in a joint, a ligament, a tendon, cartilage or muscle.--

--60. The composition of claim 45, wherein the pain is located in a knee, back, ankle, hand, foot or neck.--

--61. A composition for treating osteoarthritic pain in an animal for a sustained period of time, which comprises:

a polymer matrix containing sodium hyaluronate and a nonionic polymer, said polymer matrix being suspended in a liquid medium;

a therapeutically effective amount of a drug for treating osteoarthritic pain dispersed within said polymer matrix;

wherein the molar ratio of the sodium hyaluronate to the nonionic polymer is 1:0.5 to 4, said sodium hyaluronate being present in amounts of about 2.0% to about 3.5% by weight of said composition; and

wherein said composition is ~~capable of being~~ topically applied to said animal to treat osteoarthritic pain.--

--62. The composition of claim 61, wherein the molar ratio of the sodium hyaluronate to the nonionic polymer is 1:0.5 to 2.--

--63. The composition of claim 61, wherein said sodium hyaluronate has a sulphated ash content below about 15%, a protein content below about 5% and purity of at least 98%.--

--64. The composition of claim 61, wherein the drug for treating osteoarthritic pain is selected from the group consisting of anesthetics, analgesics, nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDS), steroids, hormones, antibiotics, metal salts, minerals, and combinations thereof.--

--65. The composition of claim 61, wherein the drug for treating osteoarthritic pain is diclofenac ~~or a derivative thereof~~.--

--66. The composition of claim 65, wherein said derivative is selected from the group consisting of diclofenac sodium, diclofenac potassium and combinations thereof.--

--67. A composition for treating osteoarthritis in an animal for a sustained period of time, which comprises:

a polymer matrix containing sodium hyaluronate and a nonionic polymer, said polymer matrix being suspended in a liquid medium;

a therapeutically effective amount of a drug for treating osteoarthritis, said drug being dispersed within said polymer matrix;

wherein the molar ratio of the sodium hyaluronate to the nonionic polymer is 1:0.5 to 4, said sodium hyaluronate being present in amounts of about 2.0% to about 3.5% by weight of said composition; and

wherein said composition is ~~capable of being~~ topically applied to said animal to treat osteoarthritis.--

--68. The composition of claim 67, wherein the drug for treating osteoarthritis is selected from the group consisting of anesthetics, analgesics, nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDS), steroids, hormones, antibiotics, metal salts, minerals, and combinations thereof.--

--69. The composition of claim 67, wherein the drug for treating osteoarthritis is diclofenac ~~or a derivative thereof~~.--

--70. The composition of claim 69, wherein said derivative is selected from the group consisting of diclofenac sodium, diclofenac potassium and combinations thereof.--

--71. A method for treating pain in an animal for a sustained period of time, which comprises:

topically applying to said animal a gelled composition comprising a therapeutically effective dose of a drug for treating pain; said drug being uniformly distributed in a polymer matrix which is suspended in a liquid medium;

wherein the polymer matrix contains sodium hyaluronate combined with a nonionic polymer.--

--72. The method of claim 71, wherein the drug for treating pain is selected from the group consisting of anesthetics, analgesics, nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDS), steroids, hormones, antibiotics, metal salts, minerals and combinations thereof.--

--73. The method of claim 71, wherein the drug for treating pain is diclofenac ~~or a derivative thereof~~.--

--74. The method of claim 73, wherein said derivative is selected from the group consisting of diclofenac sodium, diclofenac potassium and combinations thereof.--

--75. A method for treating osteoarthritic pain in an animal for a sustained period of time, which comprises:

topically applying to said animal a gelled composition comprising a therapeutically effective dose of a drug for treating osteoarthritic pain; said drug being uniformly distributed in a polymer matrix which is suspended in a liquid medium;

wherein the polymer matrix contains sodium hyaluronate combined with a nonionic polymer.--

--76. The method of claim 75, wherein the drug for treating osteoarthritic pain is selected from the group consisting of anesthetics, analgesics, nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDS), steroids, hormones, antibiotics, metal salts, minerals and combinations thereof.--

--77. The method of claim 76, wherein the drug for treating osteoarthritic pain is diclofenac ~~or a derivative thereof~~.--

--78. The method of claim 77, wherein said derivative is selected from the group consisting of diclofenac sodium, diclofenac potassium and combinations thereof.--

--~~79~~ 9. A method for treating osteoarthritis in an animal for a sustained period of time, which comprises:

topically applying to said animal a gelled composition comprising a therapeutically effective dose of a drug for treating osteoarthritis; said drug being uniformly distributed in a polymer matrix which is suspended in a liquid medium;

wherein the polymer matrix contains sodium hyaluronate combined with a nonionic polymer.--

--~~80~~ 10. The method of claim ~~79~~ 9, wherein the drug for treating osteoarthritis is selected from the group consisting of anesthetics, analgesics, nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDS), steroids, hormones, antibiotics, metal salts, minerals and combinations thereof.--

--~~81~~ 11. The method of claim ~~79~~ 9, wherein said drug is diclofenac ~~or a derivative thereof~~.--